



Tennessee Department of Human Services

Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Plan

Prepared by: Child Care Services Division

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Plan Section	Page Number
I. Background	3
II. Plan Summary	3
III. Program Administration	6
IV. Command and Control	8
V. Disaster Functions	9
A. Communications	10
B. Relocation of Children Off-Site	12
C. Assessment of Child Care Services/Partner Agency Functionality	15
D. Assessment of Child Care Providers' Damages and Needs	16
E. Facilitating the Development of Temporary Child Care	17
F. Special Licensing Policies and Reestablishment of Safe/Healthy Care	19
G. Continuing the Reimbursement for Subsidized Child Care	20
H. Child Care Subsidy Application Emergency Procedures	21
I. Other Assistance	22
VI. Child Care Agency Plans (Scope and Components)	22
VII. Child Care Emergency Preparedness Teams	31
VIII. References and Resources	32
IX. Attachments	32

Summary of Child Care Services Overall Responsibilities for Disaster and Emergency Coordination

I. Background

There are approximately 2500 licensed child care facilities in Tennessee with a capacity to serve an estimated 159,000 children. The National Commission on Children and Disasters recognized the need to improve emergency preparedness for children. In 2009, an interim report was released that recommended requiring disaster planning capabilities for child care providers. Trust for America's Health identified a gap in their annual 2009 preparedness report, which found that Tennessee lacked a requirement that child care facilities (child care providers) have a multi-hazard written evacuation and relocation plan for emergencies. For example, Tennessee consistently ranks in the top ten in the nation in the number of reported tornados. The plan also addresses the mandate set out by the Office of Child Care for CCDF funding grantees to develop formal emergency planning, response, and recovery processes for early childhood programs.

In November 2009, the Department of Human Services - Child Care Services Division launched an emergency preparedness initiative to develop a state plan. This initiative focused on gauging the level of emergency preparedness in rural and urban child care facilities, and identified resource needs, and emergency preparedness policies.

II. PLAN SUMMARY

A. Plan Purposes

In the event of an emergency, the role of the Tennessee Department of Human Services Child Care Services Division (CCS) is to support child care providers and to assist in the provision of safe and healthy child care alternatives for families during and after a disaster or emergency. The Emergency Preparedness Plan provides specific actions that the Department may take in emergency situations to include but not limited to the following:

- Child Care Services division will partner and coordinate with local and state emergency management officials, law enforcement, fire, health, and other community resource agencies in providing assistance to child care facilities and families.
- Provide assistance to displaced child care facilities.
- Assist families needing immediate alternative child care
- Facilitate reunification of displaced children with their families .

The plan includes provisions for:

- The coordination and communication in the event of a disaster or emergency.
- Coordination in the relocation of children in affected child care settings.
- The assessment of the ability of Child Care Services and partner agencies to function, assess providers' needs, and aid in the coordination of temporary child care.
- Meeting the requirements set forth in T.C.A. § 71-3-517 that all licensed child care agencies excluding drop-in child care centers shall have a written multi-hazard plan to protect children in the event of an emergency.

B. Emergency Preparedness

The emergency preparedness plan is a living document. The plan places emphasis on safety, leadership, education, training, and public awareness. The plan creates a comprehensive approach to addressing emergency preparedness and disaster planning with licensed child care facilities. This plan was developed through data gathering, meetings with various state and local child care partners, licensing, public health officials, child care providers and emergency management officials. The plan is developed to assist a child care provider in taking steps to eliminate or reduce the impact of an emergency, develop the capacity to respond to disasters, and assist programs in returning to a normal state after a disaster has occurred.

The plan addresses the following areas:

- ✎ Licensing rules and regulations that focus on multi-hazard disaster-preparedness planning
- ✎ Providing on-going provider training and technical assistance that integrates working relationships with local emergency management agencies, public health officials, and others.
- ✎ Creating a web-site to make available disaster related and emergency preparedness resources, templates, sample forms, etc.
- ✎ Encouraging and promoting local partnerships that incorporate the entire community in disaster planning.
- ✎ Continuing CCDF assistance and child care services after a disaster.

C. CCS Disaster Functions

The following activities may be carried out during or after a disaster to make sure that children remain safe and healthy:

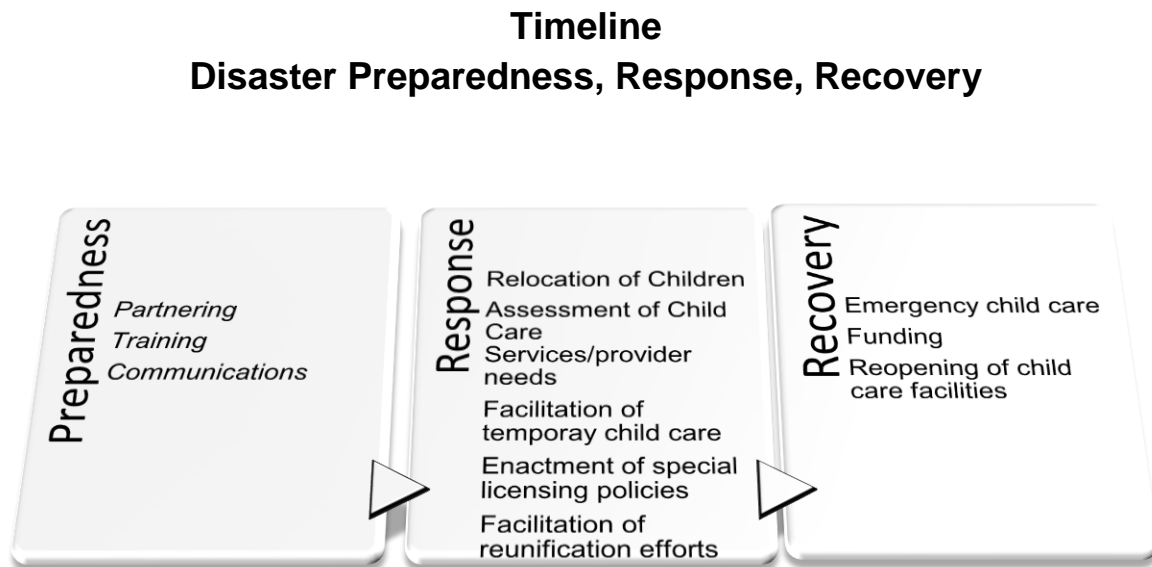
- Communicating with partners and customers.
- Assisting in the relocation of children off-site as needed.
- Assessing whether the Department's capacity to carry out its roles has been affected by the disaster and making provision for the continuation of core Department

functions such as monitoring for compliance with health and safety standards and subsidized child care services.

- Assessing child care facilities' damages and needs.
- Facilitating the development of emergency child care arrangements.
- Activating special licensing policies as needed.
- Creating a team to carryout emergency preparedness functions.
- Ensuring that the disaster teams have access to a hard copy of this plan.

D. Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Timeline

The diagram below approximates the timeline for disaster functions that may be carried out by the staff. Disaster **preparedness** refers to actions that occur prior to a disaster. Disaster **response** refers to actions that occur during, or directly after a disaster. Disaster **recovery** refers to assistance that helps to return the community to normal or near-normal conditions.



It should be noted that disaster functions could require extra staff, equipment, supplies, or financial resources. Whether or not Child Care Services carries out an individual disaster function depends on the specific needs at the time, as well as the resources available. The Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Team (central office and field staff, other departmental division staff) will determine which disaster activities or functions should be implemented.

III. Program Administration

Child Care Services developed this plan to support providers in giving families safe and healthy alternatives for the care of their children during and after disasters. The plan includes objectives outlined in the Child Care Development Fund Plan, an overview of the Child Care Services team structure, and training requirements for staff and partners.

A. CCDF Plan Requirements

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that States and Territories include a Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan for coordination of activities with the State/Territory human services agency, emergency management agency, child care licensing agency, State/Territory local resource and referral agencies, and the State Advisory Council (SAC) (or other state- designated cross-agency body) that includes:

- Guidelines for continuing CCDF assistance and child care services after a disaster, which may include provision of temporary child care, and temporary operating standards for child care after a disaster.
- Requirements that child care providers receiving CCDF have in place procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, lock-down, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions.
- Requirements that child care providers receiving CCDF have in place procedures for staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills.

B. Child Care Services – Team Structure

Child Care Services will use a team structure to plan and oversee how to respond and assist child care facilities in the event of a disaster or an emergency. The central office emergency preparedness team will convene to discuss the appropriate response. The team is composed of, a Tennessee Emergency Management Agency representative, Child Care Services staff, Fiscal Service staff, Office of General Counsel staff, Assistant Commissioner and others as designated by the Commissioner. The team will provide oversight, and manage specific disaster response tasks. *(See DHS Team Organizational Chart to illustrate the child care services model for team interaction during an event at the end of this document)*

C. Regular Review and Update of Disaster Plan

The Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Plan will be reviewed annually by the team to assess the effectiveness of the emergency preparedness objectives outlined in the CCDF Plan. The Child Care Services Director will oversee the annual review process of the plan. The Commissioner will have final approval on any revisions to the plan. An updated plan will be disseminated to Child Care Services staff and partners, as appropriate.

D. Training of Child Care Services Staff and Partners

- **Distribution of emergency plan materials**— Child Care Services staff, other Departmental staff, and partners will receive copies of the Emergency Preparedness Plan. Hard copies of the plan will be maintained in a location known to members of each disaster team. New staff will receive information about the plan as part of their general orientation with the Child Care Services personnel and the materials will be added to intranet as a resource. Disaster-related team lists including work and home contact information will be updated and distributed to team members on an annual basis.
- **Orientation for persons with disaster preparedness/response roles**—Orientation sessions will be coordinated throughout the year for all disaster team members as needed.
- Staff members and partners tasked with disaster response roles that are unique to their geographical areas will receive specific training to address those unique response needs.(i.e. activation of a response plan for the New Madrid Seismic Zone in the Memphis and West Tennessee area)

E. Specific Child Care Services Preparations for Storms and Major Disasters

- *Child Care Services/State backup of computer systems.* The Department's IT Division will work to ensure that regular backup processes are maintained.
- *Inventory of staff information.* Child Care Services might, as part of its disaster plan or team list update process, ask staff each year to volunteer information to help the Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Team quickly develop solutions in emergencies. For example, staff could be asked if they have four-wheel drive vehicles, live within five or 10 miles of the office, speak a foreign language, or have other resources or attributes that could be useful in an emergency.
- *Quick review of disaster roles and processes.* If the Department of Human Services is alerted to the possibility of an impending disaster, the Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Team should put their staff on alert, ask them to review their disaster plans, be sure they have contact lists for their disaster function and regional teams, identify steps they might take to respond to the specific scenario, and contact partners to walk through how they might work together to respond to the disaster.
- *Actions to prepare Child Care Services Staff.* Child Care Services Division should encourage staff to take simple steps to reduce the risk of injury (e.g., if an emergency occurs while staff are in the office).

- *Communications to child care providers prior to disasters.*
 - ↳ Each year, Child Care Services will provide copies or make available via the web site materials for all regulated child care agencies in the state regarding emergency preparedness, safe response to disasters, and emergency contacts.
 - ↳ Electronic copies of the Preparing Child Care Programs for Emergencies “A Six Step Approach” handbook and a Checklist will be made available through the website.

IV. **COMMAND AND CONTROL**

A. **Disaster Response Process**

- The disaster response will be initiated by the Commissioner of the Department of Human Services.
- Consideration for a disaster response:
 - ↳ Declaration of state of emergency by the President of the United States, Governor of Tennessee, or other leader(s)
 - ↳ Activation of State Emergency Response Team/State Emergency Operations Center
 - ↳ Need for action by Child Care Services
 - ↳ Because disasters may require immediate action, the Commissioner or the designee of the Commissioner has full authority to activate disaster functions and temporarily reassign staff as needed to carry out response functions.

B. **Management Structure**

A team structure will be utilized to plan and oversee any disaster response. Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness teams composed of executive leadership and program staff will provide oversight and manage specific response tasks. Regional disaster teams may be designated by the emergency preparedness teams to implement the local response.

- **Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Teams** will make decisions in regard to strategies, policies, and resources. Examples of decisions may include:

- ↳ activation of disaster response or development of new responses/policies as required for a specific emergency
- ↳ development of requests for emergency resources (funding/personnel/equipment)
- ↳ temporary reassignment of staff as needed

The team will review and update the Child Care Services Emergency Plan annually.

- **Regional disaster teams (“Regional Teams”)** will be used to facilitate communication and collaboration among Child Care Services partner agencies at the regional level including public health officials, emergency management staff, and the Department of Children’s Services.

C. Broader Disaster Response

- The Department collaborates with other agencies such as the Tennessee Department of General Services, Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), and others on disaster response activities during and in the immediate aftermath of a disaster to ensure that the activities of the agency continue with minimal disruption.
- The Child Care Services Director or his/her designee will participate in any statewide emergency planning processes as designated by the Commissioner of the Department to make strategic decisions about coordination with other agencies in the event of a disaster.

V. DISASTER FUNCTIONS

The Child Care Services Division could undertake the following disaster functions in order to fulfill the Department’s role in supporting child care providers and providing families with safe and healthy alternatives for child care during and after a disaster or emergency.

A. Communications

Ensure that child care providers, the general public, and partners are aware of Child Care Services and other agencies' assistance. Facilitate communication among partner agencies to improve collaboration and avoid duplication.

Overall Child Care Services responsibilities:

- Help develop and disseminate emergency preparedness information;
- Disseminate information to help child care providers in areas affected by a disaster;
- Help disseminate information about Emergency Child Care and other types of assistance to parents in affected areas;
- Collect and share information on response/recovery efforts with Child Care Services partners (act as a central clearinghouse to reduce the chance of duplication).

1. Child Care Services Partners Who May Be Enlisted to Assist with Communications

- Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) centers
- Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA)
- Fiscal Services
- Rehabilitation Services Division
- DHS Public Information and Legislative Office (PILO)
- Local social services
- Local emergency management coordinators
- Child Care providers in affected areas
- State, regional, and local health departments

2. Pre-disaster Communications

- a) Providers will receive a copy of the Preparing Child Care Programs for Emergencies "A Six Step Approach" handbook and a Checklist as an instruction guide that provide steps in developing an emergency preparedness plan. This information will be available on a designated web site created for child care emergency preparedness.

- b) An emergency response preparedness plan should be written by each licensing regional office. Each plan should be unique to the specific needs in their perspective area. The plan can be used as a training tool with new and existing staff members, licensing field supervisors, program evaluators, and contract partners.
- c) Annual training should be required and made available to members of the child care leadership team, and staff.
- d) Changes in the rules and regulations on emergency preparedness will require in-service training with licensing staff to assure consistency and understanding of updated changes.
- e) Use a checklist to evaluate and monitor an agency's emergency preparedness plan.

3. Disaster Response Communications

- a) Child Care Services Director, his/her designee, and team activate disaster communications with the Department's Communications office.
- b) The Child Care Services Director takes the lead in preparing and reviewing press releases, disaster updates, and other written communications regarding the disaster before forwarding to the Communications office.
- c) If children need to be relocated from child care facilities facing potential dangers, the Child Care Services staff, the Emergency Management personnel and the public health officials will be responsible for obtaining information about the relocation efforts and assist as needed or upon request.
- d) The Child Care Services Director will ask the Communication Office Director to help disseminate information via media outlets in the affected areas. (The department will in turn work with the Governor's Office, Emergency Management personnel, and others to ensure the appropriate contacts are made that will enable timely dissemination of all information.)

- e) Pertinent information and updates will be posted on the Department's website and disseminated to child care providers when appropriate.
- f) Regional team leaders serve as the funnel for general information between the local and state levels, and among regions. (Regional Team Leaders communicate with field staff, child care licensing, and each other.)
- g) Child Care Certificate Program and Child Care Licensing staff will work closely with local partners to disseminate information to child care providers and families regarding local relief/recovery efforts.
- h) Child Care Services will work with local departments of social services, state, regional, and local health agencies, emergency management personnel, and other partners to determine what information related to their disaster efforts should be disseminated to providers.

B. Relocation of Children Off-Site

"Relocation" (also known as "off-site evacuation") refers to the movement of children away from regulated child care facilities to a safer location during an emergency.

Tenn. Code Ann. § 71-3-517 requires the multi-hazard plan contain:

- procedures for notification of parents of emergency
- designated relocation sites and evacuation routes to those sites,
- a reunification plan for children and families
- plans to accommodate children with special needs in an emergency situation

Child care providers are required to have a plan for relocating children as part of their emergency procedures. The law requires that providers designate in advance the site where children would be relocated, and notify parents of this relocation site. Providers are expected to follow instructions from local authorities during mandatory evacuations regarding when to relocate children. Plans must include provisions for safely transporting children to the relocation site.

The Department's role in case of relocation will be to serve as a central point of contact to:

- ensure that emergency personnel involved with evacuation/relocation have location information for all the providers in the area.
- ensure that all providers in the area are aware of any impending evacuations.

- inform providers, as needed, of designated relocation sites.
- assist providers, as needed, in locating transportation to relocate children
- obtain information, as needed, as to where evacuating providers are relocating and when they leave (to relay to parents or emergency personnel as needed)
- remind providers who are relocating children of safe transportation procedures so that there is the safe accounting for every child
- inform local social service agencies and/or local child care resource and referral agencies of providers who are relocating and whether they need assistance
- enlist local social service agencies and/or local child care resource and referral agencies in contacting providers or parents as needed, or in helping to transport children as needed

1. Partners Outside Child Care Services to Help with Functions

- Tennessee Emergency Management agency
- Local Emergency Management Coordinators
- Local partnerships and/or child care resource and referral agencies
- State, regional, and local Health Department officials

2. Before a Disaster

- a) Child Care Services staff will determine what information Emergency Management Coordinators in their areas may need in advance of a disaster – e.g., lists of child care facilities in their areas, estimates of the number of children/adults at each facility, and contact information.
- b) Child Care Services staff will obtain a list of locations designated by local authorities in advance as possible relocation/evacuation sites where affected children in child care facilities could be taken. This list will be shared with licensed facilities.

3. During Disaster – Steps to Implement a Special Response

- a) The Department will facilitate the evacuation of child care facilities as needed. The Child Care Services team will determine which roles it may play in offering guidance to providers or giving information to parents during relocation.
- b) Child care providers in the threatened area(s) will be alerted about the relocation. Child Care Services staff will contact state or local emergency personnel to ensure that emergency personnel have the latest information on location of child care facilities and find out where emergency personnel are directing facilities to relocate. Child Care Services will assist in communicating relocation information to providers as needed. Child Care Services may enlist partners (such as the local child care resource and referral agency) to assist in calling child care facilities to alert them of the relocation, and to share information from emergency personnel on relocation sites. Child Care Services and partners may also assist providers in locating transportation, if needed.
- c) To the extent possible, Child Care Services staff or partners will work with child care providers throughout the relocation to coordinate reunification of parents with children who were evacuated. Information would be made available to parents as quickly as possible concerning where their children are and how/when the parents could pick up their children. Strict procedures will be followed to make sure that children are released only to adults who have been authorized by each child's parent/guardian and that the names/contact information of these authorized persons is available at the relocation/evacuation site.
- d) Depending on the nature of the relocation, Child Care Services staff could work with the Department of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities Services and Substance Abuse Services (to offer mental health services to children who might have been traumatized by the evacuation.

C. Assessment of Child Care Services/Partner Agency Functionality

Determine how Child Care Services and/or key partners' ability to function has been affected by the emergency.

Determine how Child Care Services staff, equipment, and offices may have been affected by the emergency in order to develop appropriate Department responses. Consider polling key early childhood partners about their functionality to be able to develop appropriate disaster response activities.

1. Before a Disaster

The Child Care Services Director and/or his or her designee will clarify with team members which roles they may be likely to assume in assessing child care services/key partner functionality.

2. Following Disaster—Steps to Implement Special Response

As soon as possible after the disaster:

- a) If the Nashville area were impacted by the emergency, the Department's Child Care Services Director will identify any impacts on central office-based staff and computer/phone systems—determine what resources may be needed to address negative impacts. Child Care Services central office-based staff will relocate to the identified alternate site. The Department's Disaster Coordinator, Information Technology Manager, Budget officer, and others would assist as needed. For example, the Child Care Services Budget Officer would report Child Care Services' needs to the DHS Budget Officer. Partners such as IT (Information Technology) may also be called upon to help with the assessment, and could be tasked with helping the Department develop IT solutions.
- b) Child Care Services staff will activate phone trees to determine how their field staff have been affected, what resources would be needed to enable the field staff to resume operations, and any information the field staff know about the status of partners in their areas.

- c) Child Care Certificate Program staff in central office will develop an emergency preparedness plans for continuation of services.
- d) If the central office were so severely impacted that Nashville-based staff were unable to assume leadership roles in the immediate aftermath of the emergency, a Regional Program Supervisor could play the primary leadership role for the Department until the Nashville staff were available to reassume these responsibilities. The Program Supervisor would coordinate with the team members and the other regional team leaders to carry out the assessment of Child Care Services functionality and the status of staff.
- e) Assessments of need should be repeated periodically until the Department and key partners have returned to normal operations. Throughout the process, information generated from the assessments of need will be communicated to Emergency Preparedness Team, State Emergency Response Team members, and Child Care Services Disaster Coordinator and used to revise the response as necessary..

D. Assessment of Child Care Providers' Damages and Needs

Identify child care facilities affected by the disaster/the extent of the damage.

1. Functional Team Members

- Licensing and Assessment Supervisors
- Child Care Certificate Program staff
- Central office staff to assist with the needs assessment and consolidating data for emergency preparedness team's use
- Tennessee State Emergency Preparedness Team members

2. Before a Disaster

Team Leader will clarify which roles team members may be likely to assume in assessing the needs/damages of child care centers and homes.

3. **Following Disaster—Steps to Implement Special Response**

- a) Child Care Services Director decides to activate the needs assessment function and determines whether, given the disaster scenario, field or central office staff should take the lead.
- b) If Child Care Services field staff is given the lead role...
 - ↳ They will gather specified information about the status of child care providers in their area.
 - ↳ Information collected will be compiled by field supervisors and forwarded to central office . The Child Care Services Director will establish information reporting frequencies.
- c) Assessments of need should be repeated periodically until child care providers have resumed normal operations. Throughout the process, information generated from the assessments of need will be communicated to team members and used to revise the response as necessary.

E. Facilitating the Development of Temporary Child Care

Work with partners to ensure that healthy and safe child care arrangements are accessible to meet the needs of children and parents.

Definition of “temporary child care” for the purposes of this plan: organized supervision of unrelated children that may ordinarily be subject to child care licensure, but due to the severity of a disaster, may be allowed to operate without a license for a limited amount of time. Temporary child care arrangements would be allowed to protect the health and safety of children, as well as promote families’ efforts to recover from the disaster.

1. **Functional Team Members:**

- Child Care Licensing staff
- Child Care Certificate Program staff
- Fiscal Services Director
- Office of General Counsel

2. **Partners Outside Child Care Services to Help with Function:**

- Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)

- Head Start Association/Migrant Head Start
- Red Cross chapters Red Cross offices in disaster-affected areas
- FEMA and (after first phase of emergency management) state Division of Emergency Management site coordinators for temporary housing sites
- Local Emergency Management coordinators

As a special emergency preparedness activity, the team works with the partners listed above to make them aware of conditions under which temporary child care may be allowed and encouraged:

- 1) existing licensed child care providers are temporarily or permanently unable to continue providing services (i.e., overall supply of child care in the community is no longer sufficient, as determined through the needs assessment/other sources);
- 2) families need child care while they are seeking disaster assistance or living in temporary housing/shelters so they can focus on recovering from the disaster and their children can get special attention; and /or
- 3) emergency workers with young children need child care to be able to report for duty.

3. Following Disaster – Steps to Implement Special Response

- a) Child Care Services' Director and the team decides whether temporary child care arrangements are needed to supplement existing capacity or make child care more easily accessible to families affected by the disaster or assisting with the relief effort. If temporary child care arrangements are needed, the Director determines the appropriate scope of Child Care Services involvement.
- b) Using information gathered with the help of Child Care Services representatives or partners, the Director works with Subsidy Services, Regulatory Services, Office of General Counsel, and others as needed to determine what kind of temporary child care arrangements may be allowed and encouraged. *Examples* might include:
 - ✦ on-site child care arrangements set up at work locations as utility offices, police departments, hospitals, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or Small Business Administration (SBA) for the children of disaster critical or relief employees who must work during or just after disasters, when licensed child care facilities may still be closed
 - ✦ child care in emergency shelters if shelters are expected to be open for an extended amount of time
 - ✦ child care offered at temporary housing sites if no existing child care providers in the area can accommodate extra demand (or if transportation obstacles prevent access)
 - ✦ use of child care arrangements that are license-exempt and would not normally serve children receiving subsidy services

- c) The Assistant Commissioner of Community and Social Services, Deputy Commissioner Finance & Administration, Commissioner, and/or the Commissioner's designee will determine whether funds could be made available to help local partners finance temporary care arrangements.
- d) Temporary child care providers may be approved for a period to be determined by the Department. Child Care Services staff will assist in any regulatory matters and consider the enrollment of new or temporary providers into the Subsidized Child Care Program or the temporary expansion of capacity of current subsidized child care providers.
- e) Child Care Services will maintain a *limited* role in the development of temporary child care, serving primarily to facilitate the process and to communicate with partners about child care needs and resources. Once local partners are in communication with each other and understand what their parameters/possible resources are, Child Care Services' involvement may only need to be periodic communication to learn about the outcomes of temporary child care.

F. Special Licensing Policies and Reestablishment of Safe/Healthy Care

Provide flexibility for child care programs meeting basic health and safety standards to reopen or expand capacity.

1. **Functional Team Members:**
District Licensing Supervisors, and Program Evaluators in affected areas, and others as needed.
2. **Partners Outside Child Care Services to Help with Function:**
 - Local building, fire and environmental health inspectors
 - Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
3. **Following Disaster – Steps to Implement Special Response**
 - a) The Department, with consultation from the Office of General Counsel, may issue special licensing policies on a case-by-case basis to facilitate the reestablishment of care.
 - b) Child Care Services will provide technical assistance to licensed providers who sustain damages to determine whether they can continue operating, must temporarily close/reduce enrollment, or relocate. If a provider decides to relocate, licensing staff will help the provider reestablish licensed care on a temporary basis in the new location.

- c) If the local child care supply is impacted by the disaster and it is necessary to expand capacity, Child Care Services will provide technical assistance to any of the largely-unaffected providers who are willing to provide care for additional children.
- d) Partners may be asked to assist in communications with providers and emergency management about efforts to reestablish care.

G. Continuing the Reimbursement for Subsidized Child Care

Ensure that child care providers who offer subsidized child care are reimbursed as quickly as possible.

1. Functional Team Members:

- Assistant Commissioner Community and Social Services
- Commissioner/Designee
- Child Care Director of Planning and Development

2. Partners Outside Child Care Services to Help with Function:

- Office of the State Comptroller (indirectly, through backup of payment processing capabilities)
- Automation contacts for counties
- Child care coordinators (county agencies)
- Finance and Administration

3. Steps to Reestablish Function

- a) The disaster function team leader calls together the team to determine the extent and estimated duration of the impact on continuation of payment for subsidized care.
- b) If the Subsidized Child Care Reimbursement System is down throughout the state and it is not anticipated that the system can be reestablished within two weeks, the disaster function team identifies procedures for counties to follow in the interim. Subsidy Services staff members contact the appropriate offices to make them aware of new procedures. In the event that phone, fax, and email communications are disrupted, Subsidy Services staff will make contact on-site if it is possible to travel.

d) If normal operations are interrupted, the following efforts may be used to facilitate the continuation of payments:

- Issue payment identical to previous payment and then adjustment would be made with next payment
- Payments would be made via Edison (server is out of state), or Finance and Administration could allow for paper checks to be issued.
- Enrollments would be taken via state temporary disaster centers and/or at child care programs that are open. Application would be processed manually. Temporary approvals could be made if documents are unavailable due to disaster situation.

H. Child Care Subsidy Application Emergency Procedures

Implement procedures to process new applications for families needing assistance as a result of the emergency.

1. Functional Team Members

- Executive Team
- Central Office Director Team

2. Partners Outside Child Care Services to Help with Function:

Identified by the appropriate authority in the Department

3. Following Disaster – Steps to Implement Special Response

- a) Based on information provided by Child Care Services staff, partners, or statewide disaster reports, the Child Care Services Director or the Director's designee determines that emergency child care procedures are needed. The Budget Officer verifies that state funding is available for emergency child care.
- b) After confirming that funding exists and obtaining permission to activate emergency child care procedures field staff will be notified.
- c) Staff will develop a plan to take calls and/or see families to process requests for assistance. Enrollments would be taken via state temporary disaster centers and/or at child care programs that are open. Application would be processed manually. Temporary approvals could be made if documents are unavailable due to disaster situation.

- d) Child Care Services staff may as needed be reassigned or moved to another location.

I. Other Assistance

Respond to needs unique to the disaster scenario

The Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Team may take on other functions in order to meet the needs of children, families, and child care providers affected by a disaster.

VI. Child Care Agency Plans (Scope and Components)

The Child Care Emergency Preparedness Plan for Tennessee child care agencies outlines the expectations for protecting the health, safety, and well-being of the children in care during emergencies or natural disasters. TCA § 71-3-517 requires all licensed agencies excluding drop-in child care centers to develop a written multi-hazard plan in consultation with appropriate local authorities and local emergency management to protect children in the event of emergencies.

A. Plan Development

The agency shall develop a written multi-hazard plan that addresses the following:

1. Procedures for Notification of Parents in an Emergency

- Child care agencies shall maintain information on each child enrolled in a format that is easily transported during evacuation of the facility.
- Recommended information includes:
 - name of child
 - name of parent(s) or legal guardian and emergency contact
 - home address
 - home phone number
 - place of employment of each parent and emergency contact
 - work (or emergency) phone number of each parent and emergency contact
 - name and phone number of child's pediatrician
 - medical information such as allergies, special needs of child, medication required by child, etc.
 - name and phone number of child's health care provider

- profile of child that includes personal information about the child's likes, needs, etc.
- Child care agencies should identify someone responsible for ensuring that emergency contact information is evacuated with the children.
- Child care agencies shall notify parents through direct contact such as phone communication or through news media.
 - The following information shall be provided:
 - Nature of emergency (what, when, where, how, why)
 - General condition of children
 - Present location of children
 - Relocation site (if necessary)
 - Where and how children can be picked up by parents or by the persons designated on their emergency form

2. Designated Relocation Sites and Evacuation Routes

- Child care agencies shall have prearranged relocation sites.
- Parents shall be notified in advance of probable relocation sites.
- A plan for posting the location where children have been taken shall be maintained
- A message should be posted on the door of the facility describing where their children have been taken
- This posting shall include route and method of transportation (and mobile phone number for staff accompanying the children).
- Contact information for all drivers should be included in the emergency call-up roster.
- As children are evacuated they shall be taken to the transportation pick-up area and evacuated quickly and safely to a previously arranged site.
- Alternative transportation arrangements should be made if the agency does not normally provide transportation
- Child care agencies shall be knowledgeable of their neighborhood in the event that an evacuation on foot is required.

3. Reunification Plans for Children and Families

- Child care agency staff must remain with the children until they can be released to their parents or guardians.
- Child care agencies shall designate a safe area to which parents can be directed to sign their children out.
- Child care agencies shall be alert to the possibility that individuals sometimes use the chaotic environments during an emergency to abduct children and take precautions to ensure that children are only released to authorized individuals.

- When children are transported for emergency medical treatment they shall be accompanied by a caregiver whenever possible.
- A message should be posted on the door of the facility describing where their children have been relocated.
- Once children have been safely evacuated, the director or designated person shall contact local media and provide the following:
 - Nature of emergency (what, when, where, how, why)
 - General condition of children
 - Present location of children
 - Relocation site (if necessary)
 - Where and how children can be picked up by parents or by the persons designated on their emergency form
- Children evacuated to a site managed by the American Red Cross shall be registered at intake.
- Care agency staff shall stay with children until they have been safely released to their parents, guardians or authorized individuals.
- If a child is taken for medical treatment, agency staff shall accompany the child and remain with the child until a parent or designated person arrives to assume responsibility. In the case of one caregiver for multiple children the caregiver will have to acquire assistance.

4. Written Individualized Plans for Accommodating a Child's Special Needs in an Emergency Situation

- Child care agencies shall maintain current individualized plans for each child with special needs.
- Individualized plans for children with special needs shall include areas such as:
 - Evacuation plans for children with mobility, hearing, visual, and emotional impairments, etc.
 - Transporting children with special needs
 - Medication/specialized medical equipment
 - Emotional needs
 - Identification of staff assigned to children with special needs
 - Suitable evacuation sites that may accommodate children with special needs

The management at each child care agency has responsibility for developing and implementing an emergency preparedness plan specific to their agency.

Agency management relies on other key personnel to perform tasks that will ensure the safety of children and staff during a crisis or critical incident. Each staff member must be familiar with his or her role and responsibilities before an incident occurs through regular disaster planning and training as required by child care licensing rules.

B. Specific Disaster Planning

The agency multi-hazard plan shall include provisions for protecting children in the event of emergencies that include, but is not limited to the following:

Fire Hazard

Fires can happen at any time in a child care agency. Usually it's not the fire itself that causes the most injury and harm, it is the smoke. However, the agency can take steps to avoid or reduce damage, injuries, or loss of life:

- Inspect the building to determine if it can be made more fire-proof
- Include fire preparedness in emergency plans
- Teach children and staff what to do if a fire occurs

Possible Response Procedures:

- Evacuation
- Relocation
- Parent-Child Reunification

Facility Response Actions:

- Contact Fire Department
- Notify local law enforcement
- Determine if evacuation is required.
- Ensure that all children have been evacuated.
- Disseminate information about the incident such as relocation site and parent-child reunification procedures.
- Notify relocation site and determine an alternate site if needed.
- Take roster and emergency kits, if time allows.
- Agency staff should remain with children throughout the evacuation process.
- Upon arrival to a safe area away from fire, attendance should be taken.
- Missing or injured children should be reported.

Buildings should not be reoccupied until it has been inspected and determined safe by proper authorities.

Severe Thunderstorms/Tornadoes

Severe Thunderstorms are fairly common occurrences throughout the state. Storms often include dangerous winds and unstable conditions that sometimes produce tornados. Advance notice of approaching storms is necessary to protect children and staff. Devices such as telephones, radios, weather radios, and tone-activated receivers, can provide advance warning of dangerous conditions.

Possible Response Procedures

- Children may need to crouch and protect their heads and neck
- Reverse Evacuation
- Shelter-in-Place
- Evacuation
- Parent-Child Reunification

Facility Response Actions:

- Staff should be alerted without alarming children.
- If children are outside they should immediately be moved inside.
- Children should be moved away from windows
- Children should be moved away from water and appliances and kept off phones, during lighting.
- Children and staff should be moved to identified safe locations (basements, center of structure on lowest floor, small room such as a closet or bathroom, or under sturdy furniture). In large buildings, go to an interior hallway on the lowest floor, or to a designated shelter area (stay out of auditoriums, gymnasiums, and other structures with wide, free-span roofs).
- Warning devices should be monitored for additional information.
- Staff should remain with children throughout the shelter-in-place process.
- Missing or injured children should be reported.
- If necessary, children should be evacuated to a safer location.
- The relocation site should be notified and an alternate relocation site determined, if necessary.
- Staff and children should not be allowed to return to the building until proper authorities have determined that it is safe to do so.
- Information about the incident such as the relocation site and parent-child reunification procedures should be disseminated.

Earthquake

Earthquakes can happen in many areas in and around the State of Tennessee. The New Madrid Seismic Zone could potentially be the most dangerous of all natural hazards that could impact the State of Tennessee. Steps can be taken to reduce or avoid damage, injuries, or loss of life. Children and staff can be taught what to do in an earthquake.

Possible Response Procedures:

- Children may need to Drop, Cover, and Hold
- Shelter-in-Place
- Evacuation
- Parent-Child Reunification
- Relocation

Facility Response Actions:

- Determine what procedures should be activated.
- Decide if evacuation is required.
- Building maintenance should check mechanical ventilating systems.
- Local law enforcement should be notified of intent to shelter in place.
- Radio and Internet should be monitored for additional information and developments.
- The relocation site should be notified and an alternate site determined if necessary.
- Children and staff should be moved away from immediate danger.
- If outside; observe flags or buildings for evidence of aftershock and relocate children if necessary.
- Shelter-in-place procedures should be enacted when needed.
- Missing or injured children should be reported.
- Children and staff should remain in sheltered area until the “all clear” signal has been issued.
- Local law enforcement should be notified of any alternate relocation site.
- Information about relocation site and parent-child reunification procedures should be disseminated.
- Evacuation and relocation procedures should be enacted if a natural or propane gas leak or odor is detected.
- During evacuation, all children should be directed to report to assigned evacuation area. Class roster and emergency kits should be taken. Building should be checked to ensure that all children have been evacuated.
- When evacuation site is reached, attendance should be taken.
- Buildings should not be reentered until emergency response personnel have determined it is safe.

Hazardous Materials (Chemical Spills)

Hazardous materials accidents may originate inside or outside the building and are regularly transported on highway or rail systems. In addition, materials such as ammonia, chlorine, and propane could be used and stored in the facility. Toxic leaks or spills can result from accidents involving storage or transport. The child care facility should inspect any stored chemicals on a regular basis.

Possible Response Procedures for External Hazardous materials spill:

- Reverse Evacuation
- Shelter-in-Place
- Evacuation
- Parent-Child Reunification

Possible Response Procedures for Internal Hazardous materials spill:

- Evacuation
- Relocation

- Parent-Child Reunification

Facility Response Actions for an External Spill:

- Children should be moved away from immediate danger.
- If children are outside a reverse evacuation procedure should be considered (observe wind direction by observing flags or leaves and move children appropriately).
- Mechanical ventilating systems should be shut off.
- Local law enforcement should be notified of intent to shelter in place.
- Missing or injured children should be reported.
- Evacuation to a safer location should be considered.
- The relocation site should be notified and an alternate site determined if necessary.
- Staff and children should not be allowed to return to the building until proper authorities have determined that it is safe to do so.
- Radio and Internet should be monitored for additional information.
- Information about relocation site and parent-child reunification procedures should be disseminated.

Facility Response Actions for an Internal Spill:

- Persons discovering the spill should:
 - Alert others in the immediate area to leave the area
 - Close windows and doors and restrict access to affected area
 - Do not eat or drink anything or apply cosmetics.
- Staff and children should be moved away from the immediate danger zone.
- Evacuation procedures should be activated using primary or alternate routes, avoiding exposure to the chemical fumes.
- An all-site evacuation should be considered.
- Mechanical ventilating systems should be shut off.
- The local fire department and the Department of Public Health should be notified.
Provide the following information:
 - Site name and address, including nearest cross street (s).
 - Location of the spill and/or materials released; name of substance, if known.
 - Characteristics of spill (color, smell, visible gases).
 - Injuries, if any.
- Local law enforcement should be notified of intent to evacuate.
- Information about relocation site and parent-child reunification procedures should be disseminated.
- The relocation site should be notified and an alternate relocation site determined, if necessary.
- If a natural or propane gas leak or odor is detected, the building should be evacuated immediately.

- During evacuation, all children should be directed to report to assigned evacuation area. Class roster and emergency kits should be taken. Building should be checked to ensure that all children have been evacuated.
- When evacuation site is reached, attendance should be taken.
- Buildings should not be reentered until emergency response personnel have determined it is safe.

Floods

Flooding can occur in most regions of Tennessee from a wide variety of causes. Communities that have a designated warning system will alert staff and children in case of imminent or confirmed flooding.

Possible Response Procedures:

- Evacuation
- Reverse Evacuation
- Relocation
- Parent-Child Reunification

Facility Response Actions:

- Determine if evacuation is required.
- Local law enforcement should be notified of intent to evacuate, the location of the safe evacuation site, and the route to be taken to that site.
- Building should be checked to ensure that all children and staff have been evacuated.
- Radio and Internet should be monitored for flood information.
- Information about the incident, relocation site, and parent-child reunification procedures should be disseminated.
- The relocation site should be notified and an alternate relocation site determined, if necessary.
- The class roster and emergency kits should be taken.
- Attendance should be taken before leaving the site.
- When evacuation site is reached, attendance should be taken.
- Buildings should not be reentered until emergency response personnel have determined it is safe.

Law Enforcement Emergencies

Possible events under this item may include child abduction, riots, protests, strikes, shots fired/active shooter, crimes, domestic violence, terrorist attack, etc. Some of these situations may require lock-down of the facility.

Possible Response Procedures:

- Reverse Evacuation
- Shelter-in-Place
- Lock-down
- Evacuation
- Parent-Child Reunification

Facility Response Actions:

- Law enforcement should be notified by dialing 911.
- A code that can be paged to alert workers in other parts of the building so workers will recognize to keep children out of harm's way should be established.
- The incident should be isolated if it is safely possible to do so.
- Children should be moved to a safe location.
- If relocation is necessary, proceed with caution when leaving agency and entering streets. A police escort may be advised.

B. Training and Drills

The agency shall maintain documentation that staff are trained on the multi-hazard plan annually. The agency shall implement these emergency procedures through timely practice drills to meet local regulations and local emergency plans. Drills shall simulate conditions of a real emergency.

FEMA Online Training Resources

- ICS 100 -Introduction to the Incident Command System
- IS-700 – National Incident Management System
- IS 240 – Leadership & Influence
- IS 907 – Active Shooter

C. Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

Child Care Agencies are encouraged to monitor and evaluate the plan on a regular basis to ensure that it meets the evolving needs of the agency. Maintaining the plan and providing frequent opportunities for review and evaluation can improve readiness to respond to incidents.

Child care agencies are encouraged to stay in regular contact with the local, state, and county emergency management officials such as fire, law enforcement, Red Cross, Tennessee Department of Safety, and Tennessee Department of Health officials to be aware of the general community emergency preparedness plans and training.

VII. Child Care Emergency Preparedness Teams

Executive Team - oversees the Department's response, maintains communication with the Governor's office, and implements any special response initiatives through the Central Office Director Team.

Commissioner
Deputy Commissioner
Deputy Commissioner of Finance & Administration
Community & Social Services Assistant Commissioner
Office of General Counsel

Central Office Director Team - manages emergency preparedness communications between the Executive Team and central office/field staff and coordinates the response for each of their respective areas in conjunction with the responses of the other team members.

Child Care Services Director
Child Care Planning & Development Director
Child Care Licensing Director
Child Care Assessment Director
Fiscal Director
DHS TEMA Representative

VIII. References and Resources

Child Care Bureau <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>

North Carolina Emergency Preparedness Plan
http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/providers/pv_emergency.asp

<http://healthyamericans.org/reports/bioterror09/pdf/TFAHReadyorNot200906.pdf>

<http://www.tnema.org/public/threats.html>

Olympia, RP, et al. Compliance of Child Care Centers in Pennsylvania with National Health and safety Performance Standards for Emergency and Disaster Preparedness. Pediatric Emergency Care. 2010; 26(4):239

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/child-care-resources-for-disasters-and-emergencies>

Preparing Child Care Programs for Emergencies “A Six Step Approach” manual

Child Care Aware of America
<http://usa.childcareaware.org/>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security- Children in Disasters Guidance

U.S. Department of Homeland Security- Business Continuity Planning (BCP)

Head Start Emergency Preparedness Manual, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Office of Head Start

Disaster Preparedness Resource Guide for Child Welfare Agencies, the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Emergency Preparedness and Response planning for Child Care

IX. Attachments

Attachment 1: Emergency Preparedness Statute – Tenn. Code Ann. § 71-3-517

Attachment 2: Preparing Child Care Programs for Emergencies – A Six Step Approach

Attachment 3: DHS - Partner Agency Responsibilities by Disaster Function